THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERSTWHILE

Being a Diatribe of Aboriginals from the State of Their Dressing Gowns. In Other Words:

A PORTRAIT OF THE ASSHOLE AS A MADMAN

PART V

“Negative Assertion Results in Positive Pap Test!”

She dons her cancer with a smile,
the future for to see,
but underneath her all the while,
a man from public TV.

The Events Leading up to and Including Certain Parties of the Body, the Conclusion Being Hung, Drawn and Quartered.

A column of smoke rising majestically from the forehead of hired journalist Perry Maisonette (“Iron Lung” to his friends). He stuffed his armchair toward the window of his one-eyed Madhatter apartment. In his formative years he had been deformed, but now he’d grown to like it.

An assignment in Jamaica had brought out the best in him. His interest in methodist acting had led him to a cloakroom at the Church of Latter Day Sadists. He had been commissioned to write a piece of shit. The pay was good, and it contributed to his children’s hospitalization. He was known for his chins and an unerring nose for newsboys. A cable had arrived for him that very morning stating the obvious:

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Come too quickly. Stop. Try again. Stop. Am waiting in Paris. Stop me if you've heard it. Stop. Stuff yourself with artichokes and live. Stop. Don't stop. Stop.

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He knew it was from Amie L'Nitrate. Her style was a little obstruse. He put on his oilcloth and caught the crabs.

The Boulevard Saint-Germainegreer shone in all its springbok glory as he stepped lightly on some French loafers toward the waiting arms of Comrade Amie. "Too-tie Frootie," he gasped, inhaling the fragrance of her hairs in his nostrils. She greeted him warmly with a cold. "You haven't changed une bit, you ould bastarde!" She frenched him round the neck.

A flood of memories drowned him in a pool of sweat. “You taste bon, mon cher!” she exclamationed. “I can’t wait to get my fingures in your croutons!” said he. “OH you naughty man, you’ll never change,” she laughed, eyeing his pants.

“For you, my dear,” he said, “I’d change my address.” He gripped her by the pound and headed for the wrong bank.

“There’s too much about underwear and sweat for my liking,” he thought to himself. “Love is never having to pull yourself together,” she said quite suddenly. “Love is never having to pull yourself off,” he replied in a lighter vein.

“NEVER CROSS A HORSE WITH A LOOSE WOMAN”

THEY reached the Georges Cinque and checked each other out.

“First of all, I will refresh your memory,” she yodelled, chasing him round the roomservice. “Und then . . . God Only Knows by the Beachboys!”

He forgot his ligns and undressed. “C’mere yer little frog,” he said, hoping for a renewal of his license. “Let me tongue yer Pommes Frites.” They made vile love in front of an open fireman. “A man in my position,” he whispered from between her legs, “can’t afford the publicity.”

He resumed the audition, stopping only occasionally for hair. She, meanwhile, was fantasizing on Robert Redford and Bella the Abzug. The lotus position was beginning to strangle him. She was losing control, and he was losing his life. His tongue, however, was kosher. “Long time, no ceiling,” said Amie, holding him to the window. They were out to lunch.

For dinner they settled on a quiet small Italian followed by a vanload of Gendarmes. “This town inspires me,” he said, forcing himself on a tourist. “No wonder they never stop talking.” She nodded, her mouth full of life. “Don’t take me for granite, Perry,” said Amie stonily. “Never my love,” he sang.

There was an underlying bastard to their relationship which was to hold them in good stead in later bouts. Neither of them held each other down; in fact, they took it in turns. “One good turn deserves an encore” pretty well

summed up their relations. They spent three happy months together and parted in a seething rage.

To this day, his memories of her are clear and fresh. Like a force-fed baby, he'll never forget, and neither, I hope, will she. The Eternal Flame of Love burned the bottom out of their relationship ahoy! The captain stepped down from his bunk into . . .